

EM1 [REDACTED]

Below is a **summary** of a phone interview of EM1 [REDACTED] USCG, conducted by the **AIM informal** board on October 11, 2006 **concerning** the diving incident which resulted in two deaths on 17 **August** 2006. The AIM board members who conducted the phone interview were Captain [REDACTED], LCDR [REDACTED], and LCDR [REDACTED].

EM1 [REDACTED] **reported aboard** HEALY 1 May 2006. His previous afloat billet was in **POLAR STAR** from 2004-2006. He is presently filling an EM2 billet aboard HEALY and his collateral duty is diving.

He sailed with the HEALY for the ~~first~~ month of their Arctic West 2006 deployment. On the 4th of June he disembarked HEALY in Dutch Harbor to attend EM C schools. He was scheduled to meet the ship in Barrow AK on the 7th of October. When he left the ship the only divers aboard were LT Jessica Hill and BM2 Steven Duque.

EM1 [REDACTED] has been diving since he was about 16 **years** old. He is qualified advance open water diver and has participated in numerous recreational dives including **nitrox**, deep diving, and snorkeling. He graduated **from** the Navy Dive School's scuba **course** in October of 2004. He is a **qualified** dive supervisor and participated in over sixteen dives while assigned to POLAR STAR. He qualified as a dive supervisor by completing the Coast Guard approved PQS.

EM1 [REDACTED] **had** limited interaction with the HEALY dive team prior to his departure for **school**. He worked out once or twice with BM2 Duque, but he did not participate in any formal training or dives with LT Hill or BM2 Duque.

He does recall diving with the HEALY dive team while attached to POLAR STAR. POLAR STAR's dive team assisted the HEALY dive team with a bow thruster patching project. During that project he did not dive with LT Hill and she did not act as his dive supervisor. To the best of his knowledge her reputation was that she was a competent diver. During this dive the POLAR STAR dive team used check lists and he believes the HEALY dive team did as well.

His initial impressions are that the HEALY dive program is not as organized as the one in POLAR STAR. EM1 [REDACTED] was planning on helping the team **improve** their training, PMS, and dive **locker** organization. When he reported aboard, HEALY's dive locker was in shambles. He **remembers** having a hard time getting into the locker because tanks and other gear was strewn about the decks and was blocking the door. He had to push very hard on the door and then when it was ajar he pushed gear out of the way to enter the locker. Once in the dive locker he remembers it being quite a bit of work to secure the locker for sea.

Since he was aboard such a short time he did not have a chance to review the dive equipment PMS or the training records. But, based on the physical condition of the dive locker his best guess is that PMS was not done properly. He said he would be very

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curious to see the hours logged for dives and the PMS sheets on the dive equipment. EM1 [REDACTED] then explained the PMS program in POLAR STAR and how it emphasized PMS after every dive and regular maintenance to ensure the gear was functioning properly. If there was a problem with the gear the team would tear it down.

EM1 [REDACTED] then explained the dive training program in POLAR STAR. He said they regularly trained together in and out of the water. At least twice a month instruction was given on PMS, hyperbaric chamber, or some other dive topic of note.

EM1 [REDACTED] is approximately 5 foot 9 inches tall and weighs 155 lbs. When he dives in a dry suit he typically wears about 25 lbs of weight. When asked if he ever wore 50-60 lbs of weight his reaction was that is almost two-three times the amount needed to safely dive.

He has worn split fins in the past. Specifically, for approximately the first year he dove. He said they have no power and are problematic fitting over a dry suit. Accordingly, he switched to solid blades and never plans on changing back. He said split fins do not provide the power necessary to control a diver in a dry suit.

When asked about HEALY's dive teams reputation around the pier he said it wasn't very good. He remembers seeing a female diver from HEALY who was unable to complete the bow thruster dive. His initial observations of the locker reinforced this negative perception.

EM1 [REDACTED] was taken aback when he heard about this dive mishap. When he left the ship in Dutch Harbor there were only two divers aboard, so it was his understanding that there would not be any dive operations aboard HEALY.

EM1 [REDACTED] took orders to HEALY in order to continue his career as a Coast Guard diver and hopes he will be able to do that.

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